

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in the application. Claims 1-24 have been rejected. Claims 1, 4, 7-10 and 12 have been rejected pursuant to 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Japanese Patent No. 11-49209 to Aomatsu. ("Aomatsu"). Claims 1, 2, 4, 6-12, 14, 15, 17 and 18 have been rejected pursuant to 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Japanese Pat. No. 2000-226029 to Tashiro ("Tashiro") in view of Aomatsu. Claims 3 and 5 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being obvious over Aomatsu and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,184,605 to Hanson ("Hanson"). Claims 13, 16 and 19 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Aomatsu and further in view of U.S. Pat. No. 4,923,083 to Forbes ("Forbes"). Claims 20 and 22-24 are rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tashiro in view of Aomatsu and U.S. Patent No. 3,438,578 to Peterson et al. ("Peterson"). Claim 21 is rejected pursuant to 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tashiro in view of Aomatsu and Peterson, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,184,605 to Hanson ("Hanson").

The Applicant's attorney would like to thank Examiner Hylton for the interview conducted on July 15, 2003, at which time the prior art and the Applicant's invention was discussed in greater detail. A "Statement of the Substance of the Interview" is attached herein. It is also appreciated that the Examiner indicated that the amended claims now appear in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the previously discussed claims are provided herein in a formal amendment.

Further, pursuant to the Examiner's Comments, Fig. 1 has been amended for clarity, and is attached herein. Care has been taken to assure there is no new matter. Furthermore, the title has been amended to more accurately define the invention, and the Abstract has been amended to remove the phrase "is provided herein" pursuant to the Examiner's Comments. The Detailed Description

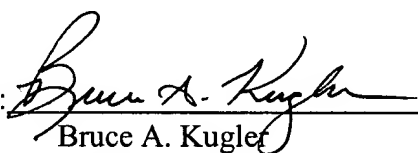
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has additionally been amended pursuant to the Examiner's Comments to provide support for claims 10 and 14.

Based upon the foregoing, Applicants believe that all pending claims are in condition for allowance and such disposition is respectfully requested. In the event that a telephone conversation would further prosecution and/or expedite allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned. attorney at 303-863-9700.

Respectfully submitted,

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